



SERGEY DOLZHENKO/EUROPEAN PRESSPHOTO AGENCY

Ukrainian Protesters Strike a Deal

Antigovernment activists ended occupation of City Hall in Kiev in exchange for amnesty for those involved in protests. Page A6.

On Health Act, Democrats Run In Fix-It Mode

By ASHLEY PARKER

WASHINGTON — The ad supporting Representative Ann Kirkpatrick, Democrat of Arizona, opens with a montage of Americana Main Streets, followed by the green fields and dirt roads of the West — the "small towns and wide-open spaces," the narrator explains, where Ms. Kirkpatrick "listens and learns."

His voice remains tranquil even as he turns to a more cutting message about President Obama's signature health care law: "It's why she blew the whistle on the disastrous health care website, calling it 'stunning ineptitude' and worked to fix it," he says, before adding, "Ann Kirkpatrick: Seeing what's wrong, doing what's right."

As Democrats approach the 2014 midterm elections, they are grappling with an awkward reality: Their president's health care law — passed almost entirely by Democrats — remains a political liability in many states, threatening their ability to hold on to seats in the Senate and the House.

As a result, party leaders have decided on an aggressive new strategy to address the widespread unease with the health care law, urging Democratic candidates to talk openly about the law's problems while also offering their own prescriptions to fix them.

The shift represents an abrupt Continued on Page A10

Common Curriculum Now Has Critics on the Left

By AL BAKER

The Common Core has been applauded by education leaders and promoted by the Obama administration as a way to replace a hodgepodge of state standards with one set of rigorous learning goals. Though 45 states and the District of Columbia have signed on to them since 2010, resistance came quickly, mostly from right-leaning states, where some leaders and political action groups have protested what they see as a federal takeover of local classrooms.

But the newest chorus of complaints is coming from one of the

most liberal states, and one of the earliest champions of the standards: New York. And that is causing supporters of the Common Core to shudder.

Carol Burris, an acclaimed high school principal on Long Island, calls the Common Core a "disaster."

"We see kids," she said, "they don't want to go to school anymore."

Leaders of both parties in the New York Legislature want to rethink how the state uses the Common Core.

The statewide teachers' union withdrew its support for the standards last month until "ma-

ior course corrections" took place.

"There are days I think, 'Oh my God, we have to slow this thing down, there are so many problems,'" said Catherine T. Nolan, a Queens Democrat who is chairwoman of the State Assembly Education Committee.

The objections in New York have become so loud, and have come from such a wide political spectrum, that even the governor, Andrew M. Cuomo, a Democrat, has become a critic. Governor Cuomo has called the state's execution of the standards "flawed" and appointed a panel

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VICTOR J. BLUE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Kimberly Celifarco with one of her students, Gerson Perez, 5, at Public School 253 in Brooklyn.

Saving an Endangered British Species: The Pub

By DANNY HAKIM

LONDON — One by one, the pubs are disappearing in Hampstead, a jewel-box village of cobbled lanes and Georgian homes that has become one of this city's most fashionable neighborhoods. The Nags Head has become a realty office. The King of Bohemia is now a clothing shop. The Hare & Hounds has been replaced with an apartment building.

Changing economics and shifting tastes have claimed roughly one out of every five pubs during the last two decades in Britain, and things are growing worse.

Since the 2008 financial crisis, 7,000 have shut, leaving some small communities confronting unthinkable: life without a "local," as pubs are known.

And that has spurred the government into action. New legislation is letting people petition to have a pub designated an "asset of community value," a status that provides a degree of protection from demolition and helps community groups buy pubs themselves, rather than seeing them get snatched up by real estate developers eager to convert them for other uses or tear them down. Since the Ivy House, a beloved local in south London, be-

came the first to receive the designation last year, roughly 300 others have followed suit.

"The pub, we like to think, is relatively internationally unique, it's a very traditional thing," said Brandon Lewis, the Conservative member of Parliament who is the Community Pubs Minister, an office that underscores the special place pubs occupy in British life. "In many communities they are really important, not just because it's where people come together, but it will be the focal point for fund-raising for the community, for the local football club, for the dance class, for the moms' coffee

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A Mad Dash for Salt Rescues Olympic Slopes

By SAM DOLNICK

KRASNAYA POLYANA, Russia — A senior adviser to the Sochi Olympics convened an emergency meeting late last week with top winter sports officials at the Park Inn hotel in the Alpine village here.

A situation had grown dire. It was not security, attendance or doping that was the problem. It was salt.

Four months earlier, Hans Pioren, one of the world's leading experts on salt and snow, had told Sochi officials that the Alpine skiing events required more than 19

tons of salt, a crucial ingredient for melting soft snow so it can refreeze into a hard surface.

But the organizers did not listen, to their great regret. Now, with 10 days of competition remaining, many of the Games' signature events were in jeopardy of being compromised, and even canceled.

Tim Gayda, a Canadian consultant who is a senior adviser to the Sochi organizers, called the meeting Thursday night, according to some people who were there. He told the group that the strongest kind of salt, the large-grain variety, was simply not

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DMITRY LOVETSKY/ASSOCIATED PRESS

Salt was thrown before a Nordic relay race Sunday at the Alpine resort near Sochi.

NATIONAL A9-11

Disagreement Over Drought

While global warming has been linked to drought in some regions, researchers say that may not be the reason for the dry spell in parts of California, like Rancho Murieta, below. PAGE A11



NATIONAL

Florida Law Loomed in Trial

Florida's contentious self-defense law may be the reason a jury failed to reach a verdict in the killing of a teenager in a dispute over loud music. PAGE A9

NEW YORK A12-16

Silver Lining in the Snow

Meteorologists see this season's relentless cycle of snow and rain as a rich trove of data for future storms. PAGE A12

The George Polk Awards

Journalists who broke news of government surveillance led the list of honorees for investigative work. PAGE A16

INTERNATIONAL A3-8

Plan to Protect European Data

Angela Merkel, the German chancellor, has supported efforts to create European data networks to ensure communications are secure from spying. PAGE A6

BUSINESS DAY B1-6

Tracking the Web's Criminals

A security blogger follows cybercriminals, who make billions off spam, malware, fraud and theft. PAGE B1

'Tonight' Returns to Birthplace

The "Tonight" show, now with Jimmy Fallon, returns to the New York studio that it left nearly 42 years ago. PAGE B1

ARTS C1-8

A Chameleon's Life

A discovered memoir by Anita Reynolds details a Zelig-like existence starring in early black films in Hollywood, modeling in Paris, below, and sidestepping racial misperceptions of her. PAGE C1



SPORTSMONDAY D1-10

Comeback Bid Ends Abruptly

Mark Mulder, 36, had not pitched in the major leagues in six years because of shoulder problems. But he was back in spring training this month with the Los Angeles Angels, with a new delivery and a low-90s fastball. Now a ruptured Achilles' tendon has cut short his hope of a return. PAGE D1

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Paul Krugman

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